

GARDENER GAZETTE

Quarterly Newsletter of AJMPU Unit Master Gardeners

COVID-19 UPDATE

The situation with COVID-19 continues to evolve daily. As such, we ask for patience and understanding as we try to interpret how directives and policies apply to our volunteers and the Master Gardener program. On Friday, March 20th, Governor Pritzker issued a stay-at-home order as part of the state's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The order will be in effect through April 7 to keep people home as much as possible and minimize the person-to-person contact that has fueled the global pandemic. To comply with this directive and to do our part to help to curb the spread of the virus across this state, we have decided to temporarily suspend all on-site volunteering through Extension, including Master Gardener projects. This includes outside volunteer work at food gardens.

Because of the potential for reduced volunteer and education opportunities moving forward, there will be flexibility and understanding given for those struggling to reach the total required yearly hours due to limited opportunities.

TREE ID ADVANCED TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE!

Mastering Urban Tree Health and Identification is a train-the-trainer model of advanced training for Illinois Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. This training has several components: 7 online course modules that you work through at your own pace and an in-person workshop to be held at SIU-Carbondale on June 15, 2020. The course fee is \$40, which must be paid at the time of registration. Upon completion, you will receive a certification and Tree ID recognition pin. Register anytime between now and May 31, 2020 for this current class group.



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Questions?

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Master Gardener Coordinator for
Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski,
and Union Counties

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME

What volunteer opportunities can you still participate in during this time? Citizen science projects are a great option, because they involve you taking observations in your own surroundings and submitting them online. Master Gardeners have so much to give to these programs because of your advanced training and understanding in nature. Volunteer credit is given for the time you spend recording and submitting the info.

All of these Citizen Scientist programs give anyone interested the opportunity to help science get a more in depth picture of nature and phenomena by giving people the opportunity to input their own local data into a larger database. These valuable tools have led to many discoveries and clearer evidence of many natural phenomena, and how they change over the years.

I-Pollinate Citizen Science Work - <https://ipollinate.illinois.edu/>

CoCoRAHS - <https://www.cocorahs.org/>

Journey North - Migration Sightings - <https://journeynorth.org/sightings/>

Project Budburst - <https://budburst.org/>

BeeSpotter - <https://beespotter.org/>

Monarch Larva Monitoring Project - <https://monarchjointventure.org/mlmp>

Nature's Notebook - https://www.usanpn.org/natures_notebook

Bumblebee Watch - <https://www.bumblebeewatch.org/>

The Great Sunflower Project - <https://www.greatsunflower.org/>

MonarchNet - <https://www.monarchnet.org/illinois-butterfly-monitoring-network>

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Now through May 31, 2020 - Mastering Urban Tree Health and Identification Advanced Training. Includes online modules and one day summer in-person training, \$40. Register <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registrationNew/?RegistrationID=200065>.

April 2, 10:00-11:00am - Ecology and Identification of Common Spring Wildflowers Webinar, Chris Evans. Register: <https://go.illinois.edu/WildflowerWebinar>

April 14, 1:30-2:30pm - Four Seasons Gardening Webinar, Slow Flowers: Grow Your Own Cut Flowers, Candice Hart. Register: <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/four-seasons-gardening-webinar-series>

May 5, 1:30-2:30pm - Four Seasons Gardening Webinar, Landscape Design with Natives 101, Austin Little. Register at link above.

May 26, 1:30-2:30pm - Four Seasons Gardening Webinar, Illinois Monarch Action Plan, Maria Turner. Register at link above.

FUNDING RECEIVED FOR TWO FOOD DONATION GARDENS

Extension staff, in partnership with Master Gardeners Bonnie Grace and Marian Smith, applied for and received two Growing Together Illinois funds to support both the continuation of the Plant a Row, Watch COPE Grow food donation garden in Metropolis and the creation of a new food donation garden in Cairo, The Pilot Garden.

In partnership with 4-H Federations in Massac and Alexander/Pulaski counties, two Farm Credit community improvement grants were received to support the building of permanent fences around the gardens. Finally, a donation from the Autism Society of Southern Illinois will support the creation of a sensory garden at the Cairo garden.

The purpose of these food donation gardens is to provide fresh produce to local food pantries to help combat food insecurity and lack of access to fresh produce in our communities. In total, just under \$6,000 of funding has been leveraged for these two gardens in 2020.



JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER

We are moving forward with plans to host a Junior Master Gardener teacher training for elementary and middle school teachers, which will be held on July 8 at Shawnee Community College.

Summer camps for youth are currently being planned for Metropolis, Cairo, and Vienna, using the JMG curriculum. Please contact Erin if interested in helping.



FALL 2020 TRAINING

The next training for the Illinois Master Gardener program will be held in fall 2020 at the Mees Center at John A. Logan College in Carterville, IL. The course will take place on Tuesdays from August 18 to November 3 from 9am-4pm. This training is being held in place of the spring training.

Current interns and certified Master Gardeners are welcome to attend sessions to count towards their 10 hours of continuing education. If you missed a class in previous years, this is an opportunity to make up for that class.

Do you know of someone who would like to join the program? Application materials are online at: <https://extension.illinois.edu/fjprw/master-gardeners>.

MASTER GARDENERS IN AJMPU UNIT 27

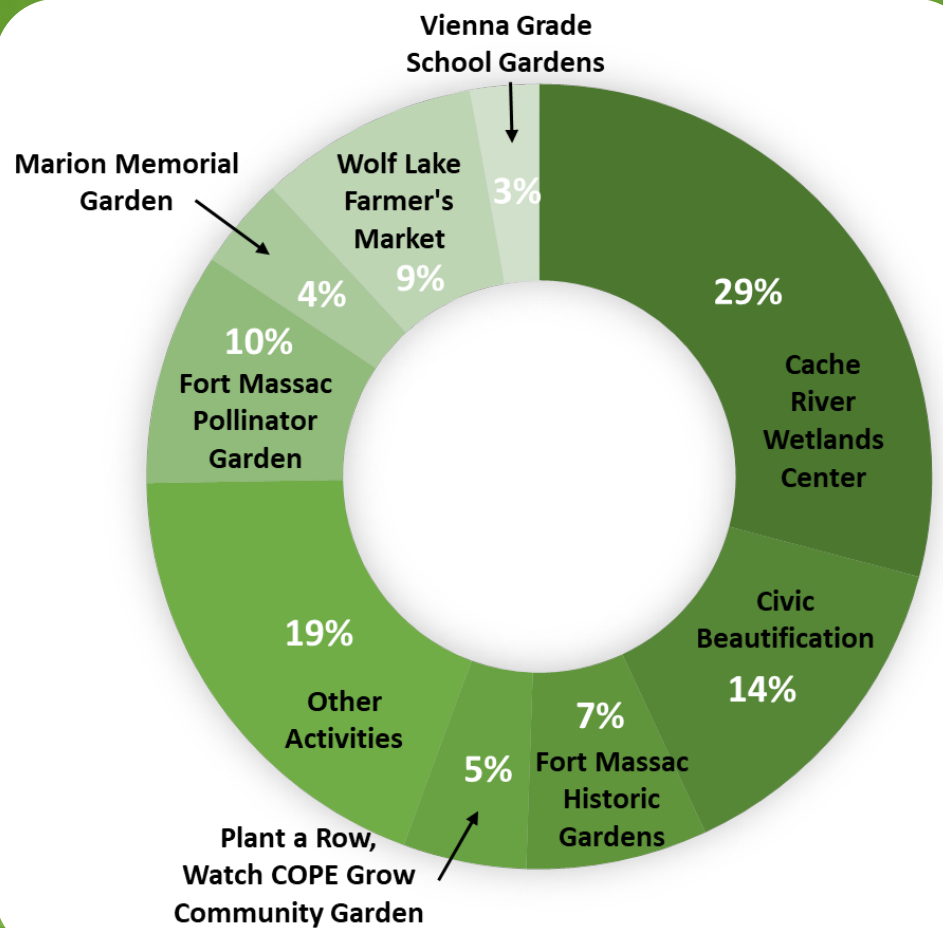
2019 IN REVIEW

**425
VOLUNTEER
HOURS**

Five new trainees completed the 12 week long training course in May.

**10 MASTER
GARDENERS**

Where Do Our Master Gardeners Volunteer?



OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Master Gardeners help others learn to grow. Master Gardeners in AJMPU Unit 27 are working on a variety of projects in the counties to address food insecurity, educate about landscaping with native plants, teach children about gardening, and provide educational resources to the public on a variety of gardening topics.

Local MG Coordinator
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